Carrie Mae Weems and Liza Lou offer an intimate look behind the inspiration of their works at The Cleveland Museum of Art

CLEVELAND (July 30, 2009) – Two of today's most accomplished contemporary artists visit the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) this summer to share the muses behind their work, as CMA's Womens Council Speakers Series presents *Evenings with Contemporary Artists* featuring Carrie Mae Weems and Liza Lou.

Carrie Mae Weems offers *Social Studies* at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26. Weems examines racial and gender themes through striking photographs. For 30 years, Weems has made people question society's stereotypes about gender, race and class through her photographs and texts. In 2005, she won the Women in Photography International Distinguished Photographer's Award. Her work, *Kitchen Table Series*, can be seen in the photography galleries of the museum's East Wing.

At 5 p.m. on Sunday, September 13, Liza Lou presents her lecture, *Durban Diaries*. Lou, an American artist, will read from her diary and talk about her experiences and inspirations living and working in South Africa. Lou is known for her unique sculptures using glass beads. Lou first became famous in 1996 when she unveiled a sculpture titled *Kitchen*, with its surface covered in millions of brightly colored, shiny glass beads. *Continuous Mile*, a work of a coiled, mile long beaded rope acquired from Lou by the museum, is on view in the contemporary art galleries of the East Wing.

Each artist will also participate in a Q&A session and book signing at the conclusion of their lectures. Weems will sign *Carrie Mae Weems: Constructing History*, and Lou will sign *Liza Lou*.

Reservations are recommended as space is limited. Admission to both evenings $40, CMA members $30; individual talks $25, CMA members $20, students with valid ID $5. *Two Evenings with Contemporary Artists Carrie Mae Weems and Liza Lou* is presented by The Womens Council. Agnus Gund serves as the honorary chair. For more information or tickets call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.clevelandart.org.

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About the Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art is renowned for the quality and breadth of its collection, which includes over 40,000 objects and spans 6,000 years of achievement in the arts. Currently undergoing a multi-phase renovation and expansion project, it is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship, performing arts, and art education. Admission to the museum has been free since its founding charter.

The Cleveland Museum of Art has a membership of nearly 25,000 households and is supported by a broad range of individuals, foundations, and businesses in Cleveland and Northeastern Ohio. The museum is generously funded by Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture. Additional support comes from the Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic

growth, educational excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. For more information on the museum, its holdings, programs, and events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.